

CLAIMS

We claim:

1 1. A method for scheduling a plurality of meetings with a
2 plurality of invitee users on a calendar of a primary user,
3 comprising the steps of:

4 said primary user creating a primary appointment
5 template identifying available meeting times;

6 sending said primary appointment template to said
7 plurality of invitee users; and

8 each said invitee user selecting an available time from
9 said primary appointment template to schedule a meeting
10 with said primary user.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of
2 identifying available meeting times on said primary
3 appointment template by specifying days worked, workday
4 start and ending times, and by blocking out previously

5 scheduled appointments and break times on said calendar of
6 said primary user.

1 3. The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of
2 creating said primary appointment template by merging a
3 default template and said calendar with primary user
4 selected meeting length, time frame and time restriction
5 objects, said default template defining said days worked,
6 said workday start and ending times, and said break times,
7 and said calendar defining said previously scheduled
8 appointments.

1 4. The method of claim 2, further comprising the steps
2 responsive to a first invitee user selecting a first
3 available time of dynamically scheduling a first meeting at
4 said first available time, entering said first meeting into
5 said primary appointment template, notifying said primary
6 user and said first invitee user of said first meeting, and
7 blocking further invitee users from scheduling a second
8 meeting conflicting with said first available time.

1 5. The method of claim 2, further comprising the steps of
2 said plurality of invitee users iteratively selecting
3 multiple meeting times from said primary appointment
4 template until there is one time selected by each said

5 invitee user, and notifying said primary user and said
6 plurality of invitee users of said one time.

1 6. The method of claim 4, further comprising the steps of
2 creating said primary appointment template as a two
3 dimensional array of objects, each said object representing
4 a block of time and an attribute.

1 7. The method of claim 6, said attribute being selected
2 from the group of attributes including current scheduled
3 meeting, free time, start time, end time, and break time.

1 8. The method of claim 7, further comprising the step of
2 presenting to said primary user a menu entry and associated
3 pop-up windows for creating said primary appointment
4 template.

1 9. The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of
2 distributing said primary appointment template as a graphic
3 object including time slots available for selection by
4 prospective meeting attendees.

1 10. The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of:
2 responsive to said first invitee user receiving a note

3 with a meeting request from said primary user, said
4 first invitee user opening said note and displaying
5 said primary appointment template in graphical format,
6 said primary appointment template being retrieved from
7 a primary server upon said note being opened.

1 11. The method of claim 10, further comprising the step of:

2 upon said first invitee user selecting an available
3 meeting time, updating said primary appointment
4 template to block further invitee users from selecting
5 said meeting time selected by said first invitee user.

1 12. The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of:

2 responsive to said first invitee user opening said note
3 containing said primary appointment template, creating
4 from said primary appointment template and a calendar
5 object for said first invitee user a first merged
6 appointment template object from which said first
7 invitee user may select said available meeting time.

1 13. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of
2 configuring time blocks of available meeting times in
3 said first merged appointment template object as

4 buttons, selection of a button resulting in the step of
5 sending an accept meeting request message to said
6 primary server.

1 14. The method of claim 13, each said time block being a
2 hyperlink linking said first invitee user to a web page
3 on said primary server for disabling said time block
4 from further selection in said primary appointment
5 template and updating a calendar object for said
6 primary user at said primary server.

1 15. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of
2 distributing an updated primary appointment template
3 to said further invitee users responsive to said first
4 invitee user selecting said first available time.

1 16. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of
2 distributing an updated primary appointment template to
3 a second invitee user responsive to said second invitee
4 user opening a copy of said note containing said
5 primary meeting template.

1 17. System for scheduling a plurality of meetings with a
2 plurality of individuals on a calendar of a primary user,
3 comprising:

4 a primary appointment template object for storing a
5 plurality of available time slots in said calendar of
6 said primary user;

7 a primary server for storing said first appointment
8 template object;

9 a plurality of calendar template objects, a said
10 calendar template object for each of a plurality of
11 invitee users;

12 a calendar tool for distributing said first appointment
13 template object to a plurality of said invitee users;

14 each said plurality of said invitee users having a
15 selector for selecting an available time slot from said
16 first appointment template object at said primary
17 server.

1 18. The system of claim 17, said primary appointment
2 template object comprising a default template and
3 appointment calendar merged with primary user selected
4 meeting length, time frame and time restrictions objects.

1 19. The system of claim 18, said default template

2 specifying work days, start, end and break times and said
3 appointment calendar specifying periodic and other
4 appointments on the appointment calendar of said primary
5 user.

1 20. A program storage device readable by a machine,
2 tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by a
3 machine to perform method steps for scheduling a plurality
4 of meetings with a plurality of invitee users on a calendar
5 of a primary user, said method steps comprising:

6 said primary user creating a primary appointment
7 template identifying available meeting times;

8 sending said primary appointment template to said
9 plurality of invitee users; and

10 each said invitee user selecting an available time from
11 said primary appointment template to schedule a meeting
12 with said primary user.

1 21. The program storage device of claim 20, said method
2 steps further comprising the steps of identifying available
3 meeting times on said primary appointment template by

4 specifying days worked, workday start and ending times, and
5 by blocking out previously scheduled appointments and break
6 times on said calendar of said primary user.

1 22. The program storage device of claim 21, said method
2 steps further comprising the step of creating said primary
3 appointment template by merging a default template and said
4 calendar with primary user selected meeting length, time
5 frame and time restriction objects, said default template
6 defining said days worked, said workday start and ending
7 times, and said break times, and said calendar defining said
8 previously scheduled appointments.

1 23. The program storage device of claim 21, said method
2 steps further comprising the steps responsive to a first
3 invitee user selecting a first available time of dynamically
4 scheduling a first meeting at said first available time,
5 entering said first meeting into said primary appointment
6 template, notifying said primary user and said first invitee
7 user of said first meeting, and blocking further invitee
8 users from scheduling a second meeting conflicting with said
9 first available time.

1 24. The program storage device of claim 21, said method
2 steps further comprising the steps of said plurality of

3 invitee users iteratively selecting multiple meeting times
4 from said primary appointment template until there is one
5 time selected by each said invitee user, and notifying said
6 primary user and said plurality of invitee users of said one
7 time.

1 25. The program storage device of claim 23, said method
2 steps further comprising the steps of creating said primary
3 appointment template as a two dimensional array of objects,
4 each said object representing a block of time and an
5 attribute.

1 26. The program storage device of claim 25, said method
2 steps said attribute being selected from the group of
3 attributes including current scheduled meeting, free time,
4 start time, end time, and break time.

1 27. The program storage device of claim 26, said method
2 steps further comprising the step of presenting to said
3 primary user a menu entry and associated pop-up windows for
4 creating said primary appointment template.

1 28. The program storage device of claim 27, said method
2 steps further comprising the step of distributing said
3 primary appointment template as a graphic object including

4 time slots available for selection by prospective meeting
5 attendees.

1 29. The program storage device of claim 21, said method
2 steps further comprising the step of:

3 responsive to said first invitee user receiving a note
4 with a meeting request from said primary user, said
5 first invitee user opening said note and displaying
6 said primary appointment template in graphical format,
7 said primary appointment template being retrieved from
8 a primary server upon said note being opened.

1 30. The program storage device of claim 29, said method
2 steps further comprising the step of:

3 upon said first invitee user selecting an available
4 meeting time, updating said primary appointment
5 template to block further invitee users from selecting
6 said meeting time selected by said first invitee user.

1 31. The program storage device of claim 30, said method
2 steps further comprising the step of:

3 responsive to said first invitee user opening said note

4 containing said primary appointment template, creating
5 from said primary appointment template and a calendar
6 object for said first invitee user a first merged
7 appointment template object from which said first
8 invitee user may select said available meeting time.

1 32. The program storage device of claim 31, said method
2 steps further comprising the step of configuring time
3 blocks of available meeting times in said first merged
4 appointment template object as buttons, selection of a
5 button resulting in the step of sending an accept
6 meeting request message to said primary server.

1 33. The program storage device of claim 32, each said time
2 block being a hyperlink linking said first invitee user
3 to a web page on said primary server for disabling said
4 time block from further selection in said primary
5 appointment template and updating a calendar object for
6 said primary user at said primary server.

1 34. The program storage device of claim 23, said method
2 steps further comprising the step of distributing an
3 updated primary appointment template to said further
4 invitee users responsive to said first invitee user
5 selecting said first available time.

1 35. The program storage device of claim 23, said method
2 steps further comprising the step of distributing an
3 updated primary appointment template to a second
4 invitee user responsive to said second invitee user
5 opening a copy of said note containing said primary
6 meeting template.

1 36. A computer program product or computer program element
2 for scheduling a plurality of meetings with a plurality of
3 invitee users on a calendar of a primary user according to
4 method steps comprising:

5 creating a primary appointment template identifying
6 available meeting times on the calendar of said primary
7 user;

8 sending said primary appointment template to said
9 plurality of invitee users; and

10 each said invitee user selecting an available time from
11 said primary appointment template to schedule a meeting
12 with said primary user.